

Appl. No. 10/528,494
Amdt. Date: 01/23/2008
Reply to Office Action of August 23, 2007

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A floating platform comprising a central column supporting one or more decks in a body of water above the water line and pontoons extending radially outwardly from the base of the central column, the improvement comprising removable ~~temporary~~ buoyancy means temporarily mounted on said pontoons at the distal ends thereof for maintaining the hydrostatic stability of said platform during installation.
2. (currently amended) The floating platform of claim 1 wherein said temporary buoyancy means comprises a removable ballast tank pivotaly secured on said pontoons at the distal ends thereof.
3. (original) The floating platform of claim 2 including a dry deck on said ballast tank supporting at least one winch thereon for connection with pre-installed tendons for developing initial pre-tension of said tendons.
4. (canceled)
5. (currently amended) A method of installing a floating platform, comprising the steps of:
 - a) providing said platform with removable ~~temporary buoyancy means~~ ballast tanks for maintaining hydrostatic stability of said platform while ballasting down to the installation draft of said platform, ~~wherein said temporary buoyancy means is hingedly secured to said platform and in a first position are horizontally disposed on said platform;~~
 - b) securing one or more winches on upper ends of said ballast tanks;
 - [[b)]c) towing said platform to an installation site and positioning said platform over pre-installed tendons;

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~~[[c]]d) moving said buoyancy means to a second upright position~~ connecting winch lines to the tendons and ballasting down said platform to an installation draft;

~~[[d]]e) ballasting down said platform to an installation draft~~ activating said winches and pulling the tendons upwardly to develop an initial tendon pre-tension ;

~~[[e]]f) connecting said platform to pre-installed~~ locking the tendons to said platform;

~~f) removing said temporary buoyancy means; and~~

g) deballasting said platform to develop the tendon pre-tension required to provide stability to said platform~~[[.]]; and~~

h) removing said winches and said ballast tanks from said platform.

6. (canceled)

7. (canceled).

8. (canceled)

9. (canceled)

10. (original) The method of claim 5 including the step of ballasting down said platform without using a heavy lift crane vessel to maintain the hydrostatic stability of said floating platform.